

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-12 ADP-00 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-11 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CIEP-02 STR-08

TRSE-00 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 SS-15 NSC-10 RSR-01 /128 W
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R 221803 Z MAY 73

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5260

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS EC BRUSSELS 2849

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ELAB EEC, SGEN

SUBJECT: MAY 21 EC COUNCIL (SOCIAL AFFAIRS)

REF: A. EC BRUSSELS 1034 B. EC A-143

1. BEGIN SUMMARY, THE EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MET ON MAY 21 FOR A FORMAL AND WIDE- RANGING DISCUSSION OF THE COMMISSION' S PROPOSALS FOR A BROAD SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAM AS REQUESTED BY THE EC SUMMIT LAST OCTOBER. A CONFERENCE INCLUDING TRADE UNION AND EMPLOYER GROUP REPRESENTATIVES IS SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 28 IN LUXEMBOURG TO CONSIDER THESE PROPOSALS FURTHER. FOLLOWING THIS THE COMMISSION WILL DRAFT PRPOSALS FOR A DEFINITIVE PROGRAM FOR THE COUNCIL' S APPROVAL BEFORE THE
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END OF THE YEAR, WHICH WOULD MEET THE JANUARY 1, 1974 DEADLINE SET BY THE SUMMIT. HOWEVER, A DISAGREEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC) CONCERNING PARTICIPATION AT THIS CONFERENCE BY OTHER UNIONS SERIOUSLY THREATENS TO JEOPARDIZE THIS TIMETABLE. AND SUMMARY.

2. THE COMMISSION PROPOSALS (FULL TEXT BEING POUCHED) INCLUDE A NUMBER OF GUIDELINES FOR COUNCIL DISCUSSION. THEY STRESS FULL EMPLOYMENT IN THE COMMUNITY AS A PRIMARY AIM (THE CURRENT EC UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS 2.5 PER CENT), AND URGE THAT NEW JOBS BE CREATED IN UNDERDEVELOPED AND DEPRESSED REGIONS. THE PROPOSALS CALL FOR MEASURES TOO PROVIDE FOR A MORE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME AMONG THE LESS- FAVORED ELEMENTS OF THE EC POPULATION, SUGGESTING A VARIETY OF DEVICES, INCLUDING THE INTRODUCTION OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS. THE COMMISSION ALSO SUGGESTS INTER ALIA THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A EUROPEAN VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER; PILOT HOUSING PROJECTS, PARTICULARLY FOR MIGRANT WORKERS; AND THE ABOLITION OF THE ASSEMBLY LINE. IN ALL OF THESE ENDEAVORS THE COMMISSION EMPHASIZED THE NECESSITY FOR CONSULTATION WITH LABOR AND MANAGEMENT (" THE SOCIAL PARTNERS") AND ALSO FOR THE CONCLUSION OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS AT THE EUROPEAN LEVEL.

3. THE COUNCIL RESPONSE WAS GENERALLY FAVORABLE TO THE COMMISSION PROPOSALS. HOWEVER, SOME COUNCIL MEMBERS FELT THAT THE COMMISSION GUIDELINES DID NOT SUFFICIENTLY LINK SOCIAL POLICY TO OTHER COMMUNITY POLICIES, SUCH AS ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION. THE FRENCH VIEWED THE DOCUMENT AS INSUFFICIENTLY DYNAMIC, PARTICULARLY IN ITS FAILURE TO DEAL ADEQUATELY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS. THE BRITISH, WHILE EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE THEY ATTACHE TO SOCIAL POLICY, JOINED THE FRENCH AND THE DANES IN OPPOSITION TO ANY RIGID RULES CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY SOCIAL POLICY BY THE MEMBER STATES. THE GERMANS FAVORED AN ACTIVE MANPOWER POLICY IN THE DEPRESSED AREAS OF THE COMMUNITY RATHER THAN INCREASED FUNDING OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS. THE ITALIANS INSISTED THAT THE COMMUNITY ABIDE BY THE SUMMIT DEADLINE (JANUARY 1, 1974) ON SOCIAL POLICY DECISIONS AND

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CALLED FOR FURTHER REFORMS IN FINANCING SOCIAL FUND PROJECTS.

4. THE COUNCIL DID NOT REACH ANY DECISIONS ON ANY OF THESE POINTS. HOWEVER, THIS COUNCIL MEETING IS TO BE FOLLOWED BY A CONFERENCE IN WHICH TRADE UNION AND EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES

WILL ALSO PARTICIPATE WITH THE COUNCIL AND THE COMMISSION TO DISCUSS THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS. THIS CONFERENCE IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN LUXEMBOURG ON JUNE 28. FOLLOWING THE CONFERENCE THE COMMISSION IS INSTRUCTED TO DRAFT A DEFINITIVE PROGRAM TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL IN SEPTEMBER. THIS WILL PERMIT THE COUNCIL TO MAKE FINAL DECISIONS BY THE END OF THE YEAR, THEREBY MEETING THE JANUARY 1, 1974 DEADLINE SET BY THE EC SUMMIT LAST OCTOBER.

5. THIS TIMETABLE MAY BE SERIOUSLY JEOPARDIZED, HOWEVER, IF THE EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (ETUC) GOES THROUGH WITH ITS THREATENED BOYCOTT OF THE CONFERENCE UNLESS CERTAIN ORGANIZATIONS ARE EXCLUDED FROM PARTICIPATING IN IT (SEE REF B). THESE ARE THE FRENCH CGC, THE FRENCH CFTC, THE DANISH FTF, AND THE GERMAN DAG. DURING THE COUNCIL MEETING, THE FRENCH AND GERMANS REPORTEDLY SOUGHT FULL PARTICIPATION BY THESE TRADE UNIONS AT THE CONFERENCE WHILE THE BRITISH FAVORED INVITING THEM TO PARTICIPATE ONLY AS OBSERVERS. THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (BELGIAN MINISTER OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR ERNEST GLINNE) WILL MEET WITH THEO RASSCHAERT, ETUC GENERAL SECRETARY, LATER THIS WEEK IN ORDER TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE. GREENWALD

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